

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 22, 2005. Claims 24-41 are presented for examination. Claims 24, 31, 37 and 41 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 24, 31, 37 and 41 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The specification has been amended to conform the Summary of Invention section to the amended claims.

Claims 24, 25, 31, 32, 37, 38 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,164,827 (Paff).

Claims 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 39 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paff in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,359,644 (Salvati).

Claims 28, 29, 35 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paff in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,034,986 (Karmann).

As shown above, Applicants have amended independent Claims 24, 31, 37 and 41 in terms that more clearly define what they regard as their invention. Applicants submit that these amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Claim 24 is directed to an image processing apparatus including: (1) an input unit adapted to input image data; (2) a reception unit adapted to receive information of a size of an object or a distance to the object, for detecting a desired object, from an external apparatus via a communication interface; (3) a detection unit adapted to detect whether the desired object exists in the image data input by the input unit within a predetermined range, on the basis of the

information received by the reception unit; and (4) a transmission unit adapted to transmit information corresponding to a detection result of the detection unit to the external apparatus via the communication interface, in a case that the detection unit detects that the desired object exists in the predetermined range.

Paff relates to a surveillance apparatus which uses a plurality of cameras, including a master camera MD and a plurality of slave cameras SD1-SD5, all arranged in a plane 2 (see Figure 1). The master camera MD is adapted to train on or view a selected subject in the reference plane 2, and to provide information related to the selected subject to the slave cameras SD1-SD5. Upon receiving such information from the master camera MD, the slave cameras SD1-SD5 adjust one or more of their respective pan, tilt, focus and zoom motors in a preselected manner (preferably to train on or view the selected subject), provided that the distance of the slave camera to the selected subject falls within a predetermined range (columns 4, lines 6-15 and lines 50-61).

Specifically, in the Paff system, an operator located at a monitoring station can (1) view a primary monitor, which displays the video output of the master camera MD, and (2) transmit messages via a joystick to the controller 10 of the master camera MD requesting a change in the pan angle and tilt angle of the image and lens assembly 17 of the master camera MD (column 4, lines 23-32). In response, the controller 10 drives a pan motor and/or tilt motor of the master camera MD in the desired direction causing the master camera MD to train on or view the selected subject, and stores the values for the pan angle and tilt value of the master camera MD (column 4, lines 33-41).

As the master camera MD is moved, the controller 10 periodically calculates

the coordinates of the selected subject in the plane 2 based on the current pan and tilt angles, as well as the stored master camera's height above the plane 2 and coordinate position in plane 2. The calculated coordinates of the selected subject are then broadcast to all of the slave cameras SD1-SD5 (column 4, lines 42-49). After receiving this broadcast, a controller 10 in each slave camera SD1-SD5 calculates the range or distance of its respective slave camera to the selected subject, using the received coordinates of the selected subject and stored information at the respective slave camera as to its coordinate position in the plane 2 and its height above the plane 2. If the calculated range is within a predetermined range, the lens assembly of that slave camera is then trained on the selected subject (column 4, lines 50-61).

Applicants submit that nothing has been found in Paff that would teach or suggest "a detection unit adapted to detect whether the desired object exists in the image data input by said input unit within a predetermined range, on the basis of the information received by said reception unit," as recited in Claim 24. The slave cameras SD1-SD5 of Puff may be trained on a selected subject on the basis of information received from the master camera MD. That is, the slave camera is trained on the subject regardless of whether the subject exists in the image data picked up by the image and lens assembly of the slave camera. For example, even if the view of the subject by the slave camera's image and lens assembly is blocked, the slave camera may be trained on the subject based on the information transmitted from the master camera MD.

Further, if a subject is within the view of the image and lens assembly of the slave camera, but is not within the view of the master camera MD, the slave camera does not detect whether the object exists in the image data input by the input unit within a predetermined range. Accordingly, Paff fails to teach or suggest the detection unit of Claim 24.

Since Paff fails to disclose the detection unit of Claim 24, it follows that Paff does not teach or suggest “a transmission unit adapted to transmit information corresponding to a detection result of said detection unit to the external apparatus via the communication interface, in a case that said detection unit detects that the desired object exists in the predetermined range,” as recited in Claim 24.

The Office Action cites column 6, lines 56-60 as disclosing the reception unit feature of Claim 24. Applicants again respectfully disagree. The cited passage merely discusses that the master camera MD broadcasts a coordinate position of the selected subject and a desired range value to the slave cameras. However, nothing has been found in Paff that would teach or suggest “a reception unit adapted to received information of a size of an object or a distance to an object, for detecting an object, from an external apparatus, via a communication interface,” as recited in Claim 24. Applicants again respectfully submit that the coordinate position information received by the slave cameras in Paff is clearly distinguishable from the size or distance information of an object recited in Claim 24.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 24 is allowable over Paff.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants’ opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against Claim 24.

Independent Claims 31, 37 and 41 recite features similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 24 and, therefore, are also believed to be patentable over Paff for the reasons discussed above.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of

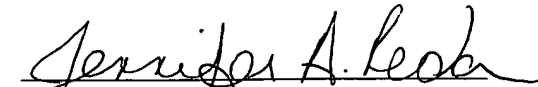
the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer A. Reda
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No.: 57,840

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

NY_MAIN 543162v1